



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Summary

Main Features

Subscribe To This Newsletter
Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators
State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS) Project
Training Course: Turning Data into Information
Training Seminar: Accessing ABS Information
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)
Changes to the Classification of Australian Import and Export Statistics
Tasmanian CUPS
Mesh Blocks Digital Boundaries, Australia
Agriculture and Environment Statistics
NatStats08 Conference
Handy Tips For Finding Information On The ABS Website
General Statistical Enquiries
Informing decisions - Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter 2008-2011
Selected Recent Releases
Future Statistical Releases

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If you wish to provide feedback or subscribe to this newsletter please contact Sasha Horsell on (03) 6222 5965 or email tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au. We also encourage you to place this newsletter on your organisation's intranet.

[Back to top](#)



Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators

Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators (TSRI) is a new web based product containing a summary of Tasmanian statistical information. It uses both ABS and non-ABS sources.

The first release covers the topics of Labour, Economic Activity and Industry. Each topic presents summary commentary and includes graphs, maps and tables of data. Excel workbooks with more detailed data at state, regional and local government levels are linked to each topic and some Population Census and regional tables are included.

TSRI content will be built up progressively over the first four quarters, and then updated regularly, as data is released. The data contained in each topic is expected to be updated

once per year. In future issues, it is planned to increase the number of regional and non-ABS tables, as data becomes available. Future releases will cover:

- Population
- Family and Community
- Household economic resources
- Education
- Housing and Construction
- Transport
- Crime and Justice
- Health
- Environment

Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators (cat. no. 1307.6) is available free of charge from the ABS website: <https://www.abs.gov.au>.

[Back to top](#)

State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS) Project

The provision of infrastructure represents an enormous investment and cost to the government and is critically important to the wellbeing of Tasmania. It needs to be properly planned, correctly located and directed towards strategic policy objectives.

The Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) has been given responsibility to create the State Infrastructure Planning System (SIPS). The SIPS project aims to develop the methodology, models and analytical tools to support improved, repeatable and transparent whole-of-state infrastructure planning.

SIPS should not be confused with an infrastructure plan, nor is it an individual tool. It is a set of models and analytical tools that support infrastructure planning and decision-making. Modelling techniques and analytical tools are used to identify future trends and evaluate alternative scenarios and options for the development of efficient and cost effective infrastructure.

The SIPS project is being undertaken in phases. The first phase focussed on the collection of base data and the development of models related to DIER's portfolio area. This included the gathering of socio-economic and demographic information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), State based spatial location information from the Land Information System Tasmania (the LIST); and other specific information from authorities such as Telstra, Hydro, Transend and Local Government. DIER road network information has also been used.

Benefits resulting from the initial phase include:

- The creation of a repository of the State's infrastructure information against a spatial reference.
- The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to integrate multiple data sources and graphically display information.
- Tools that provide access to a wide range of often-complex data without the need to be highly skilled in data manipulation or retrieval processes.
- The ability to conduct timely, repeatable analysis across a range of scenarios.
- An improved understanding of complex modelling techniques and methodologies.

SIPS has also developed a demographic data explorer tool that allows time series comparison of concorded ABS Census data, a journey to work analysis tool that accesses ABS Census travel data, a freight demanders survey tool for analysis of the State's current freight activities, and a forest freight model for analysis of current and future forest freight movement across the State road network. It has explored areas such as speed and traffic analysis, travel demand modelling, accessibility modelling, small area population forecasting and infrastructure construction cost analysis.

A pilot study was undertaken between February and December 2006 to model infrastructure provision for the Sorell, Primrose Sands and Dodges Ferry areas as a demonstration of SIPS analysis techniques applied to State and Local Government social and physical infrastructure.

The next phase of the project is to address whole-of-government issues using SIPS analytical and modelling techniques.

Following wide consultation across Government agencies, SIPS has identified the following key areas of interest and need:

- **Greater access to socio-economic and demographic information.** Consistent socio-economic and demographic information is essential for all Agencies in order to perform analysis of specific issues and in developing sound policy.
- **The availability of population projections.** Access to population distribution projections across a range of scales down to suburb level is important for Agencies to perform analysis of specific issues. Predicted growth and distribution at both the State and local levels assists with future infrastructure planning and social policy development.
- **A greater visibility of land use data.** Visibility of land supply information primarily relates to the amount of residential land available for future use and assists with the prediction of infrastructure requirements.
- **The Statewide transport network.** The cost and impact of the transport network is a key element of the State's physical infrastructure and provides an important role in promoting sustainable development, growth and productivity.

SIPS intend to address these key themes over the next few years. For more information about the project, please contact Ian Hughes, Project Manager, on (03) 6233 2734.

[Back to top](#)

Training Course: Turning Data into Information

The Tasmania Office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics will be running a two-day course on **Turning Data into Information** from 11-12 June 2008.

This course develops skills in interpreting and analysing data and communicating information clearly and effectively. Analytical thinking skills are developed to enable the transformation of data into meaningful information such as written reports. A key theme of this course is analytical thinking to ensure relevant messages are extracted from data to meet set objectives. At the conclusion of the course you will be able to:

- Understand how the collection and compilation of data affects its usefulness, quality and relevance
- Draw conclusions from analysis
- Communicate results effectively

- Present graphs and tables
- Recognise possible pitfalls in analysis

This course will appeal to people who wish to extract relevant information and communicate that information to a variety of audiences, e.g. through written reports.

The cost of the two-day course is \$750 per person.

For further information, please phone Sally Wilkinson on 03 6222 5878 or email: tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au.

[Back to top](#)

Training Seminar: Accessing ABS Information

The Tasmania Office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics will be running a **free** 90 minute seminar on **Accessing ABS Information** on 27 May 2008 in Hobart.

This seminar will increase participants' ability to access ABS information, including the wealth of free data available on the ABS website. The overview of the ABS website will include:

- themes
- navigation & search
- Census data

This seminar will also introduce participants to the range of ABS services available, how they can meet your information needs, and where you can go for help.

The seminar is suitable for a range of users, including government, business, and library sectors. For further information, please phone Scott Calver on 03 6222 5812 or email: tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au.

[Back to top](#)

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

The full release of the suite of four Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (cat. no 2033.0.55.001), together with an information paper (cat. no. 2039.0) and a detailed technical paper (cat. no 2039.0.55.001), will be made available on Wednesday 26 March 2008. However, in view of strong demand for earlier access to the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (IRSD) to enable important and time-critical uses of the IRSD, the ABS released a preliminary version of the IRSD only, and a preliminary information paper, on 18 February 2008. This release of the IRSD is for Collection District (CD) only.

This release will be superseded by the full release on 26 March, which will contain more detailed information about SEIFA, its compilation and its uses. We do not expect the actual index values for the IRSD to change between this preliminary release and the final, but some changes may occur as a consequence of the final validation process that will precede the full release. The ABS advises users, especially those with no prior experience of SEIFA indices, to wait for the full release with the complete accompanying documentation and manual, and notes that the IRSD may not necessarily be the most suitable index for all applications.

For further information please phone Mary Eagle on 03 6222 5906 or email:

Changes to the Classification of Australian Import and Export Statistics

The United Nations has issued an update to the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) which the Australian Bureau of Statistics will implement from the July 2008 reference month. SITC is the United Nations' recommended classification for presenting merchandise trade statistics and is the underlying classification scheme for Balance of Payments (BoP) goods statistics. As a consequence of the changes to SITC, a number of related international trade classifications will be impacted. For further information please see Information Paper: Changes to International Trade Statistics, July 2008, 2007-2008 (cat. no. 5368.0.55.009) which was released 10 January 2008.

[Back to top](#)



Tasmanian CUPS (Community of Users and Producers of Statistics) now has its own web page on the National Statistical Service (NSS) website. The page provides information about the CUPS free seminar program and also provides links to information on training and seminars. Membership of CUPS is free. To join or for further information please email tasmania.statistics@abs.gov.au, or visit the Tasmanian CUPS page.

[Back to top](#)

Mesh Blocks Digital Boundaries, Australia

The ABS has developed Mesh Blocks as a new micro-level geographical unit for statistics. There are 314,369 spatial Mesh Blocks covering Australia with most residential Mesh Blocks containing approximately 30 to 60 dwellings. Mesh Blocks have been designed to be small enough to aggregate accurately to a wide range of spatial units and enable a ready comparison of statistics between geographical areas, while large enough to protect against accidental disclosure. Mesh Blocks are intended to become the new building block of statistical and administrative geography.

Experimental Mesh Blocks from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing are now available; the usual residence population and total dwellings are provided for each Mesh Block. See Mesh Blocks Digital Boundaries, Australia, 2006 (cat. no. 1209.0.55.002), released 29 February, 2008. The release of data for aggregations of Mesh Blocks is still under consideration by the Census Program, see <https://www.abs.gov.au/census> for more details on data availability.

This 2006 release of Mesh Blocks is experimental and boundaries will be reviewed and revised in preparation for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

The ABS is currently reviewing the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) with the primary aim of simplifying and stabilising the classification. The proposed new Australian Statistical Geography will be built up from Mesh Blocks and be composed of a

hierarchy of geographical units that will fulfil all the functionality of the present ASGC. For example, it is anticipated that the CD will be replaced by a similar sized unit expected to be called a Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1). Details of the review and a proposal to replace the ASGC can be found in the Information Paper Review of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (cat. no. 1216.0.55.001).

[Back to top](#)

Agriculture and Environment Statistics

Final estimates from the 2005-06 Agricultural Census are now being released. Products include:

- **Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, 2005-06** (cat. no. 7121.0); released 4 March 2008. This publication contains final estimates from the agricultural census at state and national levels and for the Murray Darling Basin.
- **Agricultural Commodities: Small Area Data, Australia, 2005-06** (cat. no. 7125.0); released 7 March 2008. These spreadsheets contain all data collected in the agricultural census (excluding water) for state, Statistical Division (SD) and Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions. Major data items for Statistical Local Area (SLA) levels are also included.
- **Water Use on Australian Farms, 2005-06** (cat. no. 4618.0); released 13 March 2008. This publication contains final estimates from the agricultural census on water use by agriculture. Estimates will be published for key pastures and crops irrigated at the national and state levels, and for the Murray Darling Basin. A summary of irrigation activity will also be published at the national, state, Statistical Division (SD), Drainage Division and Natural Resource Management (NRM) region levels. Sources of water for agricultural use will be published nationally and by state. Additional information will be released as datacubes in late March for key pastures and crops irrigated at the Drainage Division and NRM region levels. A summary of irrigation activity will also be released at the Statistical Local Area (SLA) and River Basin levels.

The ABS also plans to release other sub-state geographic level data from the 2005-06 Agricultural Census in the coming months.

Publications from the 2006-07 Agricultural Survey include:

- **Agricultural Commodities, 2006-07** (cat. no. 7121.0); to be released 28 May 2008. This publication will contain final estimates from the agricultural survey. It will be supported by the release of spreadsheets in **Agricultural Commodities: Small Area Data, Australia, 2006-07** (cat. no. 7125.0), which will contain all data collected in the survey (excluding water) for state, Statistical Division (SD) and Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions.

Two value of agricultural production publications will also be released:

- **Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, Preliminary, 2006-07** (cat. no. 7501.0); released 12 February 2008. It contains first estimates of the gross value of production of selected crops, livestock slaughterings and livestock products at the state level.
- **Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, 2005-06** (cat. no. 7503.0); to be released 8 May 2008, will contain final value of production estimates at the state level.

Customised services

The ABS can customise a product to meet your specific policy, planning, research and commercial analysis needs. ABS consultants are experts in producing customised tables. For further information, call the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070. For agriculture statistics contact Linda Falzari on (03) 6222 5943 or email agriculture.statistics@abs.gov.au, and for environment statistics contact David Rankin on (03) 6222 5961.

[Back to top](#)



Planning for the ABS-hosted NatStats 08 Conference is well underway. The conference will be held from 19-21 November 2008 at the Crown Promenade in Melbourne and will connect users and producers of official statistics, and provide an opportunity for participants to discuss strategies for improving statistics for policy and decision makers.

The main theme for the conference will be "Working together for a better informed Australian Society". Key note and invited speakers are being identified who are significant contributors in the policy arena or who are valued and recognised in their particular field of work and can provide insights into the future role of statistics.

The NatStats 08 Conference will be linked with the global initiative being led by the OECD on Measuring Progress in Societies as well as the Australian initiatives being developed through the 2020 Summit and the National Reform Agenda.

If you would like more information on the conference please email Mark Lound at mark.lound@abs.gov.au or phone 02 6252 6325. Alternatively if you would like to register your interest in the conference please email conference solutions: natstats@con-sol.com or phone 02 6285 3000.

Keep your eyes open for details of the conference in future editions of Tasmanian Statistical News.

[Back to top](#)

Handy Tips For Finding Information On The ABS Website

When you are looking for information on the ABS website and are not quite sure where to start, head to our Help pages. Here you will find:

- First Visit: Provides information on what statistics are available, how you can use the ABS website, how ABS can provide information to suit your particular needs
- Overview of the ABS website
- How do I?... Information ranging from downloads and printing, to navigating to statistics, bookmarking statistical releases, citing ABS sources, and using Themes to find statistics

- Searching for information on the ABS website
- Frequently Asked Questions

Another page you may find helpful is the Statistics page. A particularly useful feature of this page is the Popular Statistics where you will find links that take you straight to the source of information you seek.

[Back to top](#)

General Statistical Enquiries

Phone: 1300 135 070 (between 8.30am-5.00pm EST)

Email: client.services@abs.gov.au

Fax: 1300 135 211

Post: Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney, 2001

[Back to top](#)



Informing decisions - Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter 2008-2011

On 24 January, the ABS released its new Service Delivery Charter: Informing decisions - Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter 2008-2011.

The Charter outlines the ABS' commitment to providing a quality customer service, specifying what our customers can expect when they approach us for statistical or other information through any of our service channels. In addition to information about the ways in which we can assist our customers to make better informed decisions, the Charter also includes a range of performance indicators for which the ABS is accountable. We will report on our performance against these measures in the ABS Annual Report.

The Charter was developed through a process of consultation with ABS clients, customers and staff, and will be reviewed during 2010.

An electronic version of the Charter can be found on our website at <https://www.abs.gov.au> then click on 'About Us'.

[Back to top](#)

Selected Recent Releases

29/02/2008 Schools, Australia (cat. no. 4221.0)

Statistics on schools, students and teaching staff involved in the provision or administration of primary and secondary education, in government and non-government schools for all states and territories. Also includes apparent retention rates for students to Years 9, 10, 11 and 12, plus student/teaching staff ratios, school age participation rates and some information on indigenous students.

29/02/2008 Census Tables, 2007 (cat. no. 2068.0)

New Census Tables have been made available on Working Population topics, including data on Journey to Work.

28/02/2008 Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Dec 2007 (cat. no. 5625.0)

Preliminary estimates derived from a sample survey of private businesses. Contains estimates of actual and expected new capital expenditure by type of asset (new buildings and other structures/equipment, plant and machinery) and by selected Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification industries. Available by state/territory.

27/02/2008 Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, Dec 2007 (cat. no. 8755.0)

Presents preliminary statistics for the value of construction work done in Australia. Separate data is shown for building work done and for engineering work done for both the private and public sectors. The building work done data is further dissected into new residential, alterations and additions to residential and non-residential work. State/territory data available.

27/02/2008 Employment in Culture, Australia, 2006 (cat. no. 6273.0)

Contains details from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing on the number of people employed in the arts and culture industries and occupations. Includes a breakdown by demographic characteristics. It also includes comparisons with data from the 2001 and 1996 censuses. Some state/territory data available.

25/02/2008 Underemployed Workers, Australia, Sep 2007 (cat. no. 6265.0)

Provides information on visible underemployment. Persons who worked less than 35 hours in the week prior to the survey who would have preferred to work more hours were asked about whether they were looking for work with more hours, available to start work with more hours, and their experience in looking for work with more hours. Other information includes, the duration of the current period of insufficient work, and the number of extra hours preferred. Estimates can be cross-classified by labour force demographics such as State, sex, age, marital status and birthplace.

25/02/2008 Perspectives on Migrants, 2007 (cat. no. 3416.0)

A series of articles that will inform the wider community about a range of migrant and ethnicity related issues.

09/01/2008 Adult Life and Literacy Skills: State and Territory Tables (cat. no. 4228.0.55.004)

Contains a selection of tables from the publication 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Australia compiled for all States and Territories.

[Back to top](#)

Future Statistical Releases

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[Back to top](#)

About this Release

Tasmanian Statistical News is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical

releases, seminars, training and reviews.

Previously known as Statistical News Tasmania.

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